

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action, the rejection of claims 1, 4, 8, 20, 24 and 25 as anticipated by Sander under 35 USC §102(e) is maintained on the ground that Applicant's Declaration under 37 CFR § 1.131 is ineffective because the Sanders' invention is the same as Applicant's application. However, no reasons were provided to support the conclusion.

Based on a careful study of the claims of the Sanders patent and the claims of the present application, Applicant has to disagree with the conclusion reached in the Office Action. In fact, the Sanders patent and the present application claim completely different inventions. For example, the Sanders patent does not claim any of the limitations of claim 20. (Note that MPEP 706.02(b) requires the cited reference and the application claim the same invention.)

Claim 20 recites "at least three stamped metal sheet parts stacked together sandwiched." None of Sanders' claims recites three sheet parts that are stacked together sandwiched. Claim 20 also recites "each of said metal sheet parts including at least one engagement hole aligned with engagement holes in the other metal sheet parts." None of Sanders' claims recites that the first flat latching part has at least one engagement hole. Neither do they recite the three engagement holes are aligned with each other. Finally, claim 20 recites that "an elastomeric plastic cover provided to surround at least a portion of the engagement hole in a middle one of the metal sheet parts." None of Sanders' claims recites a plastic cover that surrounds at least a portion of the engagement hole.

Moreover, Sanders does not claim the limitation of claim 1 that each sheet part has at least two engagement holes.

Accordingly, the Sanders patent clearly does not claim Applicant's invention. Therefore, the rejection of claims 1, 4, 8, 20, 24 and 25 as anticipated by Sander under 35 USC §102(e) is improper.

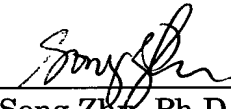
Application No. 09/726,589
Reply dated September 3, 2004
Response to Office Action dated June 30, 2004

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (CAM #038738.49427US).

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Respectfully submitted,



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